White Steed

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White Steed

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Summary

A companion piece for 'Échelle de Cruauté'.

Will and Matthew share a morning together, and a ride to work. Hannibal lingers in the background. Beverly gets more than she expected with her lunch time coffee.

Notes

A companion piece for 'Échelle de Cruauté'. Written for CynicalOrange and JawnsJumper because they were very much fanning themselves over the idea of Will getting a ride on Mattie's bike. So, your wish my lovelies, my command! Enjoy...

From the age that he was expected to wake himself Will had always been a morning person. Fish were easier to catch with the sun struggling to peak to tree tops. The water was colder, but the reward was greater. As he had grown his father had become another reason for waking at dawn. Will would wait until the alarm went off and, if his father did not emerge, Will would be compos mentis enough to head into work in his place. Getting up early had become second nature, the dawn sun welcoming him as the nights drew in and the end of the year crept closer.

Idle hands did the devil's work, as his father was won't to say. Will didn't believe in being idle.

Yet...mornings tended to be bright, *overly bright*, in Matthew Brown's apartment. White walls offset by dark wood furnishings and topped off with an eastern facing window covered by thin, white curtains. For a man who worked in an insane asylum, Will Graham thought, Matthew was far too happy to paint his bedroom in the stark, stereotypical tone.

The fact that he was always suffering from a terrible, stomach turning, eye blistering hangover whenever he woke in Matthew's bed only added to the trauma. This morning was no different. Will Graham cracked open his eyes, groaned and pulled the duvet over his head. The sound of toast popping from a toaster emanated from beyond the half closed doorway he had spied before his escape. Will's mouth felt dry. He reminded his brain to tell him to hate himself later when the rebuke would be comprehensible; he knew better than to get so damn drunk all the time. It was becoming a worrying habit.

Eventually, footsteps. Then a door creaked. Then the sound of crockery against the wooden end table next to the bed.

"You gonna hide under there forever?"

Unable to think of a suitable reply, Will stayed quiet.

"Well, I haven't got any objections. There's paracetamol and breakfast on the table, oh, and something you should drink. Patented hangover cure."

Will stayed a muted presence until the footsteps retreated. Then he waited a few minutes beyond that, while his head throbbed steadily, before slowly making his way, under the duvet, to the source of the toast smell. Hands emerged first, then forehead, then eyes. He cracked them open and stared at the offering: plate, mug, glass and two little pills. He took them each in turn. Pills first, washed down with whatever foul concoction was in the glass, then a drink of the mug which turned out to be coffee, before chewing on the dry toast upon the plate. By the time Matthew returned, dressed in a tight black t-shirt and stonewashed jeans, Will Graham was marginally less grouchy than he had been.

"What was in the glass?" he asked groggily.

"Secret recipe."

“Don’t like secrets.”

“Tough,” Matthew said, sitting down on his side of the bed and leaning against the headboard, legs crossed as he picked up a book and pulled out the bookmark, “feeling better?”

“Slightly,” Will said, eyes closed as he drank, savouring the taste, “is this real coffee?”

“Yup.”

“Thanks.”

“No problem.”

They sat in silence, broken only by the sound of a turning page every now and then. Will kept his eyes closed, eyelids showing red against the glare of the room, until the pain killers kicked in.

This was...odd, laying here with the other man beside him. He wasn’t sure yet if it was bad odd, the type that usually caused him to bolt on instinct, or ignorable odd. Normally he woke before Matthew, dressed and left. No frills, no explanations necessary. Matthew hadn’t commented yet on Will’s peremptory exits and every time Will called and asked to meet, Matthew agreed as if their behaviour so far was exemplary.

Somehow his acceptance served a contrary purpose; rather than putting Will at ease he felt on edge under Matthew’s spurious approval. He felt he was being tested. It left a bitter taste in his mouth to think it. *Familiar ground*.

Coffee finished, he put the mug back on the table and lay his head gingerly back against the pillow. He was glad to find that, despite the prevalence of his pounding headache, his stomach was no longer roiling. He licked his dry lips and took a deep breath.

“Did you know that electric current is really just a constantly moving hole?”

Will peered at the book cover in Matthew’s hands: *The Quantum Universe.*

“It’s too early in the morning for physics.”

“Not for me,” Matthew said, “I’ve been up for two hours.”

“What time is it?”

“Half ten.”

“Christ,” Will said tightly, “I have to get up.”

“Why?”

“Meeting at half eleven.”

“What about the mutts?”

“I left food out for them last night,” Will yawned, “they’ll be fine till I get back at half four.”

A pause in which Will rubbed at his temples steadily and Matthew watched him out of the corner of his eye. Will could feel it, even as the pages continued to turn. Eventually the silence was broken.

“I can drive you.”

“You’re not driving me anywhere on that thing.”

“That thing,” Matthew parroted, “The Triumph Trident is a classic I’ll have you know.”

“It could be capable of time travel and I still wouldn’t touch it.”

“Not even to get rid of your oh so terrible hangover?”

A hand in his hair had Will’s brow twitching. He shied away from the touch while keeping his stern countenance. Matthew could be heard laughing softly to himself as Will retreated back under the covers. He didn’t like the sound of the laugh. It was suspicious.

“Ok, then I propose a challenge,” Matthew said, voice slightly muffled, “if I can get rid of your headache then you let me take you to work. How about it?”

“No,” Will said categorically.

“Oh *come on*. You’re the least adventurous person I’ve ever met, you know that?”

“It’s misadventure when you don’t trust your guide’s motives.”

“Well fine. Go to work with a hangover, see if I care.”

“Don’t you start with the passive aggressive crap. I get enough of that from...”

“Who?” Matthew asked, curious, as Will hesitated.

“Never mind.”

“Ok now you’re just trying to wind me up.”

“Look who’s talking.”

“At least all I’m trying to do is help.”

“And get something for yourself while you’re at it.”

“Is that really all you..?”

“Jesus, *alright*,” Will bit out, growling as his outburst only worsened the arcing pain between his temples, “just...just hurry up about it. I don’t have a lot of time.”

He heard the book close. A drawer open. Then shuffling of covers. A puff of cool air against his back. Then cold hands against his skin, starting at his waist. Will stiffened and made to move away. Chill hands gripped him tightly enough to stall his movements.

“Don’t,” he said, his voice cold.

“Don’t what?”

“I wasn’t born yesterday,” Will said dryly, shuffling onto his side, facing away.

“Well I’m relieved to hear it, or that would make things really pretty awkward.”

“I’m tired, I’m sore, I’m not in the mood.”

“Not what you said last night,” Matthew said, fingers tracing his spine.

“You’re pushing it.”

“Good. Sometimes you need pushing.”

Too close for comfort, Hannibal’s words overlaid themselves like black marker on acetate; *there is no push without pull; up and up but always back down to the bottom you slip. Would you have yourself upon Sisyphus’ hill forever?* A kiss at his throat. Will did not move.

“You’re gonna have to relax if this has any chance of working.”

“This isn’t going to work,” Will said, even as he began to lean into the touch.

“Actually I’ll have you know there’s scientific evidence for sex curing headaches.”

“Oh?”

“Endorphins and adrenaline,” Matthew said as he drew closer, mouth moving against the sensitive skin behind Will’s ear as he spoke, “nature’s painkillers.”

The hands disappeared. There was the sound of something unscrewing. Will, eyes closed, was allowed the anonymity to imagine he was anywhere he wished. He found it unfortunate that the wish took him to dangerous places.

Hannibal’s sure touch engulfing him, safe within the tiger’s domain.

He forced his eyes open to dispel the fantasy; white sheets and white duvet greeted his sensitive eyes while Matthew fumbled behind him. Will wished Matthew would just take what he wanted with that same single-minded focus which he had always appreciated of Hannibal. At the very least Will understood that, even if physical contact had always been a problem area.

When a hand eventually slid over his waist and reached for his cock, slick with something mildly cold, Will was too busy thinking to react. Instead he shuffled uncomfortably and inhaled sharply as he was taken in hand.

“It’ll warm up,” mumbled against his ear, followed by a generous kiss against his neck.

Fistfuls of sheets, Will kept his eyes tight shut and breathed steadily through his nose. The smell of cool air and toast was being tinted with the first forming of sweat and the sweet mint on Matthew’s breath, condensing against his skin. The pain in his head throbbed in time with Matthew’s tight strokes. He could feel his mind loosening. He tried to gather it back up before he lost control of it altogether.

Jack would be at the meeting, another corpse to dissect*, Hannibal’s unmitigated sensuality drowning him with every terse gaze,* another slab of red meat on a metal tray, drained of life*, cold eyes filled with warmth, hands touching him without restraint,* a gaping mouth and pale, withered hands*, and touching and touching and...* When a similarly slicked finger found his entrance he could only mildly protest before it slid inside.

“And here I thought you only ever let me touch you when you’re drunk,” Matthew murmured.

“More,” was all Will could whisper.

“What’d you say?”

“*More*,” Will croaked out breathily.

“You fuckin’ tease.”

Everything seemed to pass in a blur, a mess of sensation and feeling. Will breathed steadily and curled his fingers tighter, the material friction burning, as Matthew rocked inside. Hot breath by his ear, ghosts of words haunting every swirl and grip of fingers. Will rolled onto his back and accepted the tongue, the sound of a fly undone, the rigid heat slipping inside, until the brightness of his world became white hot.

“Open your eyes,” Matthew said.

“What will I see?”

“Don’t have to be so damn cryptic all the time.”

“I’m used to it,” Will said, cracking open his eyes to find Matthew above him, wearing a wary smile, “what?”

“How’s your head?”

If he hadn’t been asked he wouldn’t have thought of it. He drew his brows together and looked to his right, to the piercing blank yellow of the curtains.

“Good enough to drive.”

“Should have known you’d try and weasel out of it. That wasn’t our deal.”

“Mmm. I know. Look...” Will felt Matthew roll to the right, the comforting warmth replaced by cool air tingling against his sweat chilled skin, “I need to take a shower.”

“Then you better hurry,” Matthew said, shaking his head and sighing tightly as he stood up, sorting his fly, “only got twenty minutes before traffic’ll be a nightmare.”

The shower was pleasantly rough against his skin, reddening his flesh as he turned up the heat. Will scrubbed at his forearms and tried to ignore the niggle of guilt creeping about by his feet. It looked up at him snidely. Will kept his eyes from the swirling water by the drain and washed the soap from his skin. He was just glad he no longer needed the crutches as he walked stiffly back to the bedroom to get dressed.

“So do you have anything for me to wear on this death-trap or am I just supposed to hope for the best?”

Matthew’s face lit up; a mix of affection and triumph. Will ignored it as best he could and went about his routine of drying and dressing. He was simply grateful that he and Matthew were much of a muchness in size, so the spare leather’s fit him well enough over his clothes. It seemed logical in the end, to give in. Better to drink the milk fresh than let it sour.

The elevator ride was quiet, Matthew tapping his feet on the floor as he leaned back against the wall, his hands holding the spare helmet he’d grabbed from a cupboard in the hallway. Will watched the floors flick by and focused on the humming of machinery and the slight drop in his stomach as they descended. He followed Matthew quietly to the street outside.

“Here,” Matthew said, his eyes unashamedly tracing Will's body as he handed over the helmet; Will cleared his throat, “what?”

“My face is up here,” Will said.

“Yeah and the rest of you is down there,” Matthew said, grinning.

“Smooth, real smooth,” Will shook his head and ducked into the helmet; it was constricting, stuffy, heavy and Will disliked it instantly, “I don’t want to be late for this.”

“Then get on,” Matthew said, straddling the bike and flicking up the kickstand with his foot; Will watched as the vehicle rumbled into life, spitting out a judder of smoke against the sidewalk.

“Meant to do that, is it?”

“Just get on.”

It was impossible not to touch. Will lifted his right leg and used Matthew’s shoulders to balance as he straddled the saddle. The bike purred between his thighs and Will adjusted himself to sit flat against Matthew’s back. It was difficult not to feel unsteady with only two wheels and an engine laying a slim line between himself and the road. When Matthew revved he jerked his hands forwards and gripped the younger man’s waist.

“Might wanna hold on.”

Will could only just hear him; the smart comment he had wanted to say fell foul of his own involuntary worry. Will forced his arms around Matthew's waist, holding him tightly. He thought he might have felt the vibration of a laugh, but it could have been nothing more than the bike as it moved away from the sidewalk. Will closed his eyes.

The seventeen minute ride from apartment to Quantico became nothing more than a series of lurching turns, his stomach rising and falling as Matthew applied the gas and the brake, and making sure his arms didn't waver. He only knew they had arrived when the bike went silent beneath him. Will opened his eyes, blinking as he looked to his left to find the entranceway with its barricade closed.

"You alright?"

His arms were stiff when he unlocked them from their death grip and left the bike, not entirely gracefully. Give me four wheels and a chassis any day, Will thought as he slid out of the constraining helmet. Fresh air flushed against his cheeks and the condensation on his face. He rubbed at his nose and out over his cheek. It was automatic to offer the helmet back to its owner.

"Better hold onto it," Matthew said as he too slipped out of his helmet, "I'll have to pick you up later. When'd you finish?"

"Like hell you're picking me up," Will said, "I'll ask Beverly."

"You'll ask me what?"

Will jerked around, finding the clear, dark eyes of Beverly Katz watching him from above a steaming, take-out coffee cup. If he wasn't mistaken she looked like she'd been there for a while, leaning against the wall. She took a drink and raised her eyebrows when he didn't answer. He made a face when her eyes gave him a quick once over then, very quickly, flicked to the bike and its owner behind him.

"I'm here for the meeting, thought I'd wait for you," she said, as if she needed to clarify her presence, "didn't know you owned a bike."

"I don't," Will said, his instincts clamming up, "it's not mine."

"Nice bike," Beverly said, leaning around him to speak to Matthew.

"Thanks," Matthew said, smiling, "just got her last year."

"Triumph Trident, yeah?"

"You know your bikes," Matthew said, looking impressed.

"I have a soft spot for things that go over eighty miles an hour," Beverly said, "I'm Beverly, by the way."

"Matthew," he said in reply, "heard a lot about you."

“I’ll save Will a headache and assume it was all wonderful.”

“Nothing less,” Matthew said, smiling coyly.

Despite his prolific status as the FBI’s top profiling bloodhound, Will felt a little lost in between the two as they talked over his head. Even with his hangover nothing but a shadow in his mind, Will felt his stomach knotting up.

“Jack’s going to tear us a new one if we’re late,” he said, still holding the helmet.

“Hey, you didn’t give me a time,” Matthew cut in as Will turned to leave.

Will turned back to the man, still sitting astride his bike, leaning forwards on the handlebars with his left leg stuck out against the kerb. His mouth went dry. He turned to Beverly only to be given a raised brow. This isn’t the way things were supposed to go today, he though miserably.

“I’m already giving Brian a lift,” she said, shrugging.

“Your car has four seats.”

“Yeah and only a quarter tank of gas.”

This is a damn conspiracy, Will thought to himself. He licked his thinned lips and took in a deep breath, looking down at his reflection in the sleek, black helmet.

“Fine,” he said sourly, “I finish at four.”

“I’ll be here,” Matthew said, before his face lit up, “oh, wait you forgot something.”

“Mmm?”

“Here.”

Matthew fished in his pocket and pulled out a slim glasses case; Will recognised it as his own. He walked forwards on instinct, frowning as Matthew opened the case and pulled out his specs. They were placed unceremoniously onto his face, sliding over his ears as Matthew watched him with precise concentration. He opened his mouth to say either ‘goodbye’ or ‘are you quite done?’. Neither made it to the open air.

There was only time to register the gloved hands cupping his face before he was pulled in for a thorough kiss. Will let out an ‘mmph’ of protest, even as his hands reached up to balance himself, grabbing hold of Matthew’s elbows. Slow, deliberate lips massaged his own, joined swiftly by an eager tongue. Will shuddered, eyes closed, as he was consumed. They pulled apart with a wet sound of lips leaving lips.

Will opened his eyes to find his glasses awash with white mist. He pulled them off roughly just in time to see Matthew adjusting his helmet and setting his bike purring once more. Sharp brown eyes flicked to his.

“Later baby,” came the drawl as the visor was flipped down with a swift snap and Matthew pulled out onto the road, roaring out into traffic.

Silence was left in his wake. Glasses in one hand, helmet in the other, Will turned to Beverly. He sighed as she unconvincingly covered her wide smile with her coffee cup, taking a long drink. They showed their ID’s to the security guard and were waved through.

“Not a word,” Will said stiffly as they walked together.

“Not even *yowza*?”

“I said not a word.”

“I don’t think yowza is technically a word.”

“You say anything to the others and you owe me a lift home.”

“As long as you keep the leathers on I’ll do anything you want.”

“Should I tell your fiancé that?” Will asked wryly.

“Right now I’m seriously considering buying him a set.”

I swear I’ll never touch another drop of alcohol as long as I live, Will vowed as Beverly laughed on their chill walk up the tree lined driveway amid falling leaves and oblivious faces.

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